

Wobbly by The_Defeating_Sound_of_Silence

Category: IT (2017), IT - Stephen King, Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Aged-Up Character(s), Alternate Universe - College/University, Car Sex, Cheating, Coming to terms with homosexuality, Dopelegangers, F/M, Fake/Pretend Relationship, For Plot Purposes Only, Gay Bar, Internalized Homophobia, It's Not That Wild Trust Me, It's a Sideplot, Jealousy, M/M, Manipulation, Mildly Dubious Consent, Multi, Original Female Character(s) - Freeform, Prostitution, Sonia Kaspbrak's A+ Parenting, These Tags Make It Seem Worse, handjob(s), not any of the main characters

Language: English

Characters: Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Dustin Henderson, Eddie Kaspbrak, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Hanlon, Mike Wheeler, Original Character, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris, Will Byers

Relationships: Ben Hanscom/Beverly Marsh, Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, Maxine "Max" Mayfield/Lucas Sinclair, Will Byers/Mike Wheeler/Jane Hopper

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Summary:

Eddie wants to get over his painfully obvious crush on Richie. But Richie is oblivious and gets jealous very easily. The Losers all want them to get together, and so do their roommates and friends, who just happened to all be from the same small town in Indiana. Unfortunately, the gays love unnecessary drama.

Title from the song by Ezra Furman.

1. The Inciting Incident

Author's Note:

Okay so I feel I owe the biggest explanation ever. My Tumblr account was deleted, and everybody had thought I was a scammer because of a post I made while having an anxiety attack. All the money collected from the post has been safely returned. I was in no way attempting to take advantage of the LGBT community. I am really non-binary and queer, and my parents and most of my family are alt-right Catholics. They were going to send me to a conversion camp. I tried to end my life that night. I was sent to a mental hospital and then to live with my Grandmother in South Carolina, where I am currently residing. 32,000 people attacked me with hate for something I didn't do. Please don't believe everything you read on the internet.

Also sorry for typos, I didn't edit or proofread. Comments and Kudos fuel me! (Tumblr of the same name)

Dating, at least for Eddie Kaspbrak, was a horribly bleak conquest. He was gay-- there was room no speculation about that one-- but even going in circles for other men wasn't exactly a walk in the park. The guy he wanted to like him constantly acted indifferent-- all except for sometimes.

That guy was Richie "Records," Tozier, who had just recently picked up his own comedy show on public access TV block, and thusly had even *less* time to be with Eddie.

And so, in a brutal last-ditch effort, Eddie was at a gay bar in downtown NYC. Not the safest place to be, but he had a pocket knife, rape whistle, and pepper spray should anything go awry.

The music was too loud, the lights were too bright, and the colors were horribly garrish. The air smelled of alcohol and sweat, an

unpleasant and yet not unwelcomed scent. It felt like a party he'd gone to in his teens, the memory faded but fond. It was at a house of a classmate whose name he didn't know, or care to know for that matter. He'd gotten drunk with Richie and Bev, and ended up spending the night puking in a bathroom while Richie teased him for being a lightweight and Stanley asked if he was okay every five seconds.

After being friends with the tight-knit group of losers for so long, he'd learned each of his friends drunk archetypes and how to anticipate them. More often than not, he and Stanley were the designated drivers, because in high school he couldn't stand the thought of coming home drunk to a worried mother. He wished he'd left her sooner, but she was the only sense of normality he had, so he clung to her.

Stanley was the nervous drunk. He would ramble about how there was a secret society controlling everything, how they were probably watching him *right then*, and then he'd cry because he couldn't check his blindspot. He'd find someone-- usually Ben, Mike, or one of the other losers-- to cling to, and for that reason he hated getting drunk.

Bev was the angry drunk. She was always ready to pick a fight, even if that someone was two whole feet taller than her, she'd be ready to throw a punch. Eddie was always careful around her, as she could be easily agitated and her rage could not be contained, and followed her around, apologizing for rude or crude comments made by her.

Bill was the horny drunk. Eddie had reluctantly walked in on him making out and or straight-up going at it with someone, boys or girls. It was how he'd originally discovered that Bill was pansexual and -- despite being utterly disgusted with seeing his friend, who he worshipped like an older brother and hero, like that-- the first time he hadn't felt alone.

Ben was the philosophical drunk. He went on long, rambly, and often inconsistent tirades about how if there is one being called God then how was he created? Is the universe bigger than it seems? What separates the afterlife from the galaxy? He and Stanley often collaborated on theories.

Mike was the touchy drunk. If Eddie was around him for more than ten seconds, he would wrap him in a hug and spin him around and play with his hair and even tell him how much he loved him because, “He deserved it.” Because Mike was such a strong guy, his grip was difficult to get away from and his hugs often lasted for ten minutes or even longer.

Richie was the *loud* drunk. He would always raise his voice and do impressions, or sing off-key, or just yell unintelligibly for no particular reason. Eddie noticed that he also said the weirdest things, and he must’ve thought they were funny, because he was constantly laughing at them. For example, “But if the *government* kills off *all* the moon cows, how will the astronauts get their *moooooovies*? ” He’d slurred one night, and Eddie couldn’t even think of a response, he was so confused.

Lastly, Eddie himself had reluctantly found out that he was the cuddly, super-honest drunk. He was particularly cuddly and clingy with Richie, but if he was around someone else most likely he wouldn’t leave their side for the entire night. If asked anything, no matter how awkward or personal, he would answer completely truthfully. And that was how Bev had found out about his crush on Richie.

It was Bev herself who’d encouraged him to go to the stupid gay bar in the first place. She’d reminded him that Valentine’s day was nearly a week away and if he wanted someone to have, he’d have to look quickly. And looking quickly meant settling, which wasn’t exactly something Eddie was keen on.

But Eddie decided on it with finality when Richie told him he should go. That he should find someone to call his own. Which was definitely not the kind of thing someone would say if they were interested. Which meant that Richie definitely wasn’t interested. So he got ready to go and went alone, sweating with anxiety the whole way there. Richie’s words rung encouragingly in his head.

“Aw Eds, ‘course I think you should find a date. Everyone deserves a date on Valentine’s Day. Maybe you’ll find the one. Or maybe you’ve already met them. Who knows? Only one way to find out.”

And so, he shoved open the doors to *Rainbow Orient*, internally cringing at the amount of drunk people grinding on each other.

He wasn't sure what he was expecting, but it certainly wasn't what he got when he arrived. It was crowded, which made him a little anxious, and he felt way overdressed in his black slacks and pale blue button-down, especially when complete with a silk red tie and matching black loafers. He had resigned himself to a lone corner, like a middle-schooler at a dance, just awkward. It was futile to wait for someone to come up to him, and he knew that, but he wasn't the best in social situations, and he felt his anxiety spike any time he would try to venture out of his comfort zone.

He did everything he could to avoid doing anything. He checked Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook, the only three social media's he had. He didn't even post anything, the only reason he had any social media at all was because of his friends. Bill posted on Facebook more than he'd ever known was possible, and his mother liked to use it to keep track of him, which he reluctantly let her do. The Losers as a whole had begged him to get an Instagram so that they could tag him in things, which was a little strange until he realized that with the sudden growth of Richie's comedy show, he had over twelve thousand followers. And for Snapchat... he was a little jealous of Richie and Bev's four hundred and eighty-six day streak. So he got his own, and usually sent pictures of his desk or the view from his and Bill's shared apartment. Once in a while he'd send a selfie, but only when Richie sent hundreds, practically begging him to send one.

Regardless, he knew that he wouldn't get anywhere if he didn't push himself at least a little bit. So, shoving his phone in his pocket and heaving a sigh, he maneuvered through the crowd of drunk men and sat down on a barstool.

"A cosmopolitan, please!" Eddie called over the near-deafening music, squeezing his eyes shut and heaving a sigh. If nothing else, at least he could get drunk. He was fairly certain Bill or Stan would pick him up, should he get too drunk to walk. And even though he hated it, he figured what better way than to drink away his feelings?

And then he felt a hand on his shoulder. And for a brief second, tricked himself into believing it might be Richie. Because *damn*, the

resemblance was uncanny. If Richie were a little shorter and fit his body better, if his hair had been more tamed and he hadn't worn glasses. It certainly wasn't what he was expecting. Because the guy in front of him was startlingly attractive. And as luck would have it, Eddie knew him from his job as a resident nurse.

The guy's last name was Linus, Eddie knew because it reminded him of the Charlie Brown shorts he and his mother used to watch. The only thing he knew about Linus was that he worked one floor above Eddie in the psychiatric ward with doctor Janiac, a rather small lady with kind eyes. If only her patients didn't get the reputation of being called "Janiackers," because they were always doing something or other that wasn't socially acceptable. Like taking off their shoes in the middle of the lobby. Or going to the wrong floor and pretending to be a doctor, despite the fact that they stuck out like a sore thumb.

Sometimes Eddie got to go to Linus' floor, and it was always a pleasure. More often than not, he was delivering test results of some kind to Candace Carter in the lab-- a note, Candace was a homophobic bitch-- and more often than not, Doctor Linus was mysteriously there to flirt with him. At least, Eddie picked it up as flirting.

"Cosmo? I prefer whiskey on the rocks, but whatever floats your boat." Eddie laughed nervously at that when he'd taken a seat on the barstool next to him, and kept his guard up should the man try anything.

"Never knew you were gay, Kaspbrak. Always kinda figured, but it's wrong to assume, ya' know?" Eddie nodded slightly, blushing as his drink was handed to him and he began sipping from the edge of the glass.

"No, it's- I get it. I- I don't believe we've met properly. I'm Eddie, and you are..." Eddie felt himself smiling, even chuckling a little at how nervous he was. His veins felt as though they were on fire, every nerve in his body screaming at him to check his messages, just in case Richie texted and he was worried that Eddie was going to leave him. And if that were the case, it wouldn't look good for him to essentially ignore his text. But he repressed that urge, and shoved those thoughts into the back of his head, forcing himself to have a good time.

“Even gayer than previously thought possible, Fred. The name’s Jacob.” Jacob held out his hand expectantly, and Eddie furrowed his eyebrows. Had he just called him “Fred,” or was that his imagination?

“F- Fred? It’s Eddie!” Eddie called over the music, confused. If Jacob couldn’t hear his name, it was a sure sign that the music needed to be turned down, at least a little bit. Everyone in the room, including him, was probably experiencing major hearing loss. The thought alone made him take another sip.

“Right! Freddie!” He replied, equally as loud, receiving his whiskey and taking a long sip. Eddie shook his head and leaned a little closer.

“*Eddie!*” He’d nearly screamed, downing another small portion of his drink with a sigh. It was sweet and sugary, and it reminded him of the fruity drinks he used to have as a kid.

“Oh! *Eddie*, right, of course,” Jacob laughed easily, which Eddie was grateful for. At least he didn’t tease him for it, like he knew Richie would. And he was thankful that none of his friends were there with him, to judge him. It made him feel like he had the night all to his own, despite feeling anxious up to that point.

They talked for a while, longer than Eddie could keep track of, about lots of things that they had in common. They talked about work, though briefly, and their mutual hatred of Candace. Jacob talked about wanting to be an EMT, but changing his mind once he figured out the salary of a surgeon. Eddie talked about his mother pushing things on him as a kid-- he was getting uncomfortably honest with every sip-- and how he wanted to be able to help other people with real illnesses in order to further disprove his own.

He talked about his struggles with anxiety and depression, as well as internalized homophobia for most of his childhood. Most of all, he talked about Richie. How much he liked him, how charming and funny he was.

And then Jacob slid off his barstool and leaned down to whisper in his ear.

“Let’s get out of here. Go somewhere a little more private, yeah?”

“O- okay.” Eddie decided, as though it was the simplest solution ever. A part of him knew that it was meant to be casual sex. And being outed, he was much less afraid of that than he had been as a child.

It was only when they were in his car did he begin to slightly sober up. Because they were kissing. And it was bad, because he couldn’t really feel it. But it was also good, because he wondered if he really needed to. He noticed later that Jacob looked a lot like Richie, and when a hand slid down his pants, he didn’t stop it.

He noted the taller boy’s hips rolling against his, both of them still clothed. He wished he could say he loved the feeling, but in reality... he was more indifferent than anything. He wanted to let rationality overcome stupidity, but he couldn’t let go of the warm pressure against him. The smell of whiskey on his breath, the feeling of his nose pressing into Eddie’s cheek.

Had he been paying more attention, he would have noticed that his phone was buzzing with texts from Richie, Bill, he and Bill’s roommate Mike, and he and Bill’s roommate Will. Which got confusing, because having a Bill and a Will wasn’t exactly the easiest thing to differentiate. Of course they’d been texting and calling him nonstop. He promised to be home by eight thirty, and-- albeit, jokingly-- told them that if he wasn’t, they should call the cops. But he couldn’t pay attention to that if he tried, at the moment.

He could only feel the other man’s hands on him, his touch spreading like wildfire, kiss deep and intoxicating. When he closed his eyes, he could pretend that it was Richie pumping him like that. That it was Richie kissing him, and whispering quiet praise into his ears. He could pretend like he hadn’t gotten drunk, gone to a gay bar, and hooked up with the first guy to pay him any mind. And so Eddie made a promise to himself. That he wouldn’t let Jacob just be a fling. That he would pursue him as a boyfriend, and not just a lover. Because Eddie Kaspbrak didn’t do casual sex. He could never be with someone he didn’t love.

Even as he was pushed over the edge, he promised himself that he

would stay true to his word. Jacob then asked if he wanted to go back to his place, that he had an extra room if Eddie didn't want to sleep with him. And Eddie nodded slowly, a little unsurely, but sentient all the same.

Soon enough, he felt the rumble of the car against the road, and stared out the window at street lamps, a little dreamily. He soon felt the car jolt to a stop, and then he was leaning all of his weight on the built man beside him. He was slurring words he could barely think the meaning of as they trudged back up to his apartment.

As he jammed the key in the slot and jiggled it around, Eddie tensed. He was about to enter the house of someone he didn't know. Someone who had just given him a handjob in the backseat of his *BMW*. A man. Being essentially dragged into the apartment, clinging to Jacob like a vice, he found himself wondering if they'd be doing more.

He could hear a few different voices, that of his mother or his first girlfriend. *"You're not **queer**, are you Eddie-bear? Oh, I would just die if you were, I would just die. You're made for a **woman**, you need a **woman**, a **woman's** touch. Date a **girl**, be with someone you hate, you need to have a **wife** as every man should. Go on then, find a clean and good **girl**."*

And he found himself craving more of Jacob's touch. Wanting more, more, more, chanting it like a mantra in his head. He pressed himself up against one of his stocky shoulders, pressing his heels into the ground.

"You keep a... clean, um, place," Eddie observed, internally comparing it to Richie and Bev's. There were no dirty clothes strewn across the floor. No dishes left out on the countertops. Even the trash cans were emptied, and Eddie would have applauded had he been sober enough to carry out the action.

"Thank you. I like things clean." Jacob nodded, in the middle of prying him away from his place in the doorway, his firmly planted firmly on the linoleum.

"Me too. And so does Stanny. And sometimes Will, but- but only

when he's feeling sad. He has a boyfriend and... and also a girlfriend too. Sometimes I want that, 'cause I bet it feels nice to have someone love you," Eddie slurred, shrugging. His eyebrows were furrowed in thought.

"Would you... I mean you kinda look like... would you be *my* girlfriend? I mean, like, my... um, my Chee. Will you be *that* for me?" And though he could barely see through a thick cloud of drunken haziness obscuring his vision, he could just about make out a slow nod. And he was stumbling back to the man's arms, wrapping around his middle in a hug.

He was being pulled back into the bedroom, and laid down on his back. He could vaguely feel his jacket being pulled off, and then his button-down, his shoes and then his pants, leaving him only in socks and briefs. To his surprise, Jacob was also undressing, but nothing about his movements suggested any more than sleep.

Sleep was going to feel good, Eddie thought. Probably better than the touch he'd been craving so much before. The sex would probably feel so much more satisfying when he was sober and could remember his actions.

The lamp was turned off, swallowing the room in darkness. Aside from the pale moon shining through one window, the rest of the world seemed completely devoid of light. And when he felt arms around him, and looked up, he could pretend it was Richie cradling him. Richie, who had taken his glasses off to sleep and was attempting to do just that, only with Eddie in his arms. But he knew that wasn't his Richie. His Richie was laughing at jokes, late-night car rides, jumping off the Quarry's edge, and riding bikes next to each other. His Richie was faded memories, nicotine, the sound of an old guitar. His Richie was *home*. Not sex with a stranger, or deafeningly loud music, or being too drunk to even remember his first-- second-- handjob. His Richie wasn't *settling*.

Yet Eddie found himself cuddling closer to Jacob, blackout drunk and nearly asleep, closing his eyes and *pretending*. Maybe his mistake could turn into something more, something bigger. If only he could stop thinking about Richie.

2. The Chapter That Can Be Summarized Using Only the Roblox Death Sound

Summary for the Chapter:

Some things are said. Some people get offended.
Price is Right fail sound

Notes for the Chapter:

Me, inhaling the comments on the last chapter:
gimme gimme more gimme more gimme gimme
more

Seriously I live for comments. Kudos are okay too
though. TW for one gay F slur oops

To put it simply, Richie Tozier was stressed and panicking. *Holy fuck Eds hadn't come back yet where was he where was Eds where was his boy oh shit what if he was in trouble what if he got drugged at the bar what if he tried to drive home drunk why wasn't he answering the phone oh god oh shit oh fuck.*

He had gone to Eddie, Bill, Will, and Mike's apartment to watch a movie, and for the first half he'd been Snapchattin' Eddie. But then Eddie stopped replying. And Richie figured he must have found something better to do. And eight turned to nine, and Eddie still wasn't home.

He tried to tell himself that maybe traffic was heavy. Maybe Eddie had gotten caught up with something, or some *one* perhaps. And nine became ten. And ten became eleven. And then it was midnight and Richie was panicking because Eddie wasn't answering any of his calls and he told them he didn't even want to go in the first place and he and Bev had encouraged him and... oh god, what if he got murdered? Or kidnapped? What if he was being tortured as Richie paced idly around their kitchen?

"Richie, you're making me nervous. Please stop pacing. I'm sure he's fine," Will muttered from his place at the kitchen table. The only

reason he hadn't migrated up to his room with Mike yet was because he was working on a commissioned work of art for one of the galleries that bought from him. He tiredly continued to sketch up a rough draft, lines slowly morphing into recognizable shapes.

"But you don't know that. He would have texted, or called, or fucking done something to let me know he's okay. Eddie's not the kind of guy who would just leave me hanging like this." Richie waved his cellphone in the air with an edge to his voice, Will's words only serving to make him pace faster.

"Come on, we know the same Eddie, don't we? He wouldn't ignore you unless he found something important. I bet he's got a date." Richie tensed. *Something more important.* So if he hadn't been kidnapped, he was finding the person who would steal him away. Richie's heart sunk. He was being left in favor of someone who loved him more. Or at least showed it more than Richie ever could. Because he was nothing but a *coward!* A coward and a useless, annoying faggot. He'd missed his chance to take Eddie for himself because he'd been so far up his own ass he couldn't bear to ask him anything.

Richie walked back to where Bill was sitting, bouncing his leg and watching some sort of mindless, late-night sitcom. And that was exactly what Richie needed. An escape.

He dropped his body in a lone chair with a heavy sigh, shoving his glasses up his face and glancing at his phone every two minutes, though it seemed even longer. After a grand total of five minutes, he inhaled sharply.

"Maybe I should call him agai-"

"Richie. He's not picking up. If he has his phone on he'll see all the missed calls. It's buh- barely been three hours since he sa- said he'd be ba- back," Bill stammered, clearly still on edge if his stutter was anything to go by. Richie huffed through his nose.

"How do you know? How do you know he hasn't been kidnapped, or- or- or- or *killed?*" Richie developed a stutter of his own, finding it difficult to even think the words that had been forming on his tongue. To think about a life without Eddie Kaspbrak was to think

about a life without emotion at all. He pressed himself further back into the chair, eyes glued to his phone.

“Be- because he’s Eh- Eddie. His phone probably died or something. If he were receiving your calls, he would be answering. Eh- eh-especially to you,” Bill muttered, sounding both unsure and confident at the same time.

“Oh god, Bill... what if... what if he got in the car, and- and-” Richie stopped himself before he could finish his statement, waiting for Bill to reassure him.

“He’s not suh- stupid, Rich. He wouldn’t do that to you. He knows.” Bill shot him a pitying glance, eyes tired and smile fake.

Not two weeks ago Maggie Tozier had her life taken in a car crash. He wouldn’t be able to bear it if his Eddie suffered the same fate. He might not be able to live with himself.

God, why did he have to encourage Eddie to go out? Why didn’t he just admit to being hopelessly in love with him and ruin their friendship? At least that way he wouldn’t be dead. Or worse.

That night, Richie stayed at their apartment. Even when one in the morning rolled around, and he got a text from Bev asking if he was going to come home. Even when two in the morning struck, and Mike had sleepily stumbled down the stairs, dragging Will back up with him. Even at three, when Bill had given up and resigned himself to his own bed-- not before offering it to Richie, who had declined vehemently.

He struggled to keep himself awake, eyes prying themselves open. His phone was slowly dying, as was his hope that Eddie was coming back. He didn’t sleep at all that night. Not when Eddie was out there somewhere, missing. If he ever did get access to his phone, he’d have seventy-four missed calls and thirty-one missed texts-- and that was just from Richie alone. Not even considering any of his other friends.

Just as Richie was about to fall asleep, Mike came trodding down the steps to start breakfast. He regarded Richie with a tired nod, moving past him to get to the kitchen. Richie always thought that he and

Mike looked oddly similar, and they often joked that they were each other's doppelgängers. It was like finding a renaissance painting that looked exactly like him, but he was majoring in Biology and had both a girlfriend and boyfriend.

"Stay up all night, Tozier?" He asked when he noticed Richie following him to get a cup of coffee. And Richie nodded-- exhausted-- and eternally grateful that it was a Saturday.

"Damn right, Wheeler. Can't sleep when the love of my life is MIA." If he would have turned around, he would have caught the questioning glance Mike shot him. It wasn't unusual to hear Richie making up affectionate nicknames for the boy, but it was always a little jarring to hear Richie calling him things like, "My love," or "Eddie-baby." They just seemed oddly affectionate for "friends" to use.

"Ah." Mike gave an understanding wince, as he too had hoped Eddie would be back by eight in the morning. But so far, he hadn't so much as answered a text. Richie closed his eyes and rubbed his temples, reaching into their fridge to grab a beer and pop the cap off, pouring some of it into his coffee. He turned to Mike.

"Want some?" The fluid sloshed around in the bottle as he shook it, too tired to even bother mixing anything into the caffeinated beverage.

"Gross, dude. That's gonna taste like shit." Richie shrugged and took a large sip anyway, internally cringing at the mixture of bitter coffee and malt-like beer. It burned going down his throat, because he hadn't waited for it to cool off and because there was alcohol mixed in.

"God," Richie coughed, "You're right. It does taste like shit." He studied the liquid inside the mug for a couple seconds, downing more of it carelessly. Minutes later, they heard it. The unmistakable sound of the apartment door opening. Richie raced to the door, Mike a few paces behind him.

The sight before them was not what they expected. It was Eddie, of course, but he wasn't wearing what he'd left in. He had a black

hoodie covering his arms and half of his lower body, sleeves so long they gave him a bad case of sweater paws. He was wearing even bigger red Nike sweatpants that he was basically tripping over, the only thing he'd seemed to have brought back being his shoes and a plastic bag full of what looked to be his other clothing.

"Eds!" Richie quickly wrapped him in a hug, so tight that under different circumstances Eddie might have filed an attempted homicide case, as it felt like his ribs were being crushed. Richie was so relieved, though, he couldn't be bothered to care.

It was only when he smelled way-too-expensive cologne on Eddie's clothes did he back away. Mike eyed them suspiciously from the sidelines, attention momentarily averted as Will dazedly padded down the steps behind them.

"Where have you *been*?" Richie had never been happier to see that pouty scowl in his life. Eddie elbowed the door shut so as not to wake the neighbors, taking his shoes off and lining them up by the door.

"Out," He answered simply, like a rebellious teen who had just barely broken their curfew. Richie's eyes widened, scoffing.

"Out," He repeated, "Okay then. Where could you have possibly been that was so engaging you couldn't text or call or do *something* to let us know you're okay? Wait, whose clothes are you wearing?"

The question made Eddie turn beet-red, staring intently at his bare feet. Richie briefly wondered if he himself even knew. It caused more questions to arise. Where had he woken up? Had he slept on a street corner? Did he drive drunk? Was he safe?

"Jacob's..." Eddie replied, voice so soft it was almost inaudible. Richie balked, trying not to sound insanely jealous and territorial when he muttered, "Who's Jacob?" Through gritted teeth.

"Jacob is my boyfriend and I sincerely hope that you will treat him with the respect he deserves." His statement was surprisingly put together for someone who clearly had a hangover that would make Phil, Alan and Stu's look like child's play. Richie swallowed thickly at the term. *Boyfriend boyfriend boyfriend does he mean boy who's a friend*

or boyfriend as in they're dating and he's gonna leave me for that guy and I'll never get to joke about how much I love him because his boyfriend wouldn't like that and then Eds will never look at me the same again oh god oh shit oh fuck.

"Boyfriend." Was all Richie could manage to choke out, voice strained as though it was causing him physical pain. The shorter man merely nodded lightly at the word, hiking up his ginormous sweatpants with an irritated huff.

"Yes, Richie. My boyfriend."

"Alrighty then, Eds. Show's over, you don't have to pretend your little one-night-stand is anything more. I won't tell Billy boy if you won't!" To the surprise of both of them, Richie began to laugh hysterically. It offended Eddie in a way he couldn't comprehend. How *dare* he insinuate that the only reason anyone would want to have sex with Eddie was because they just wanted a hook-up. Just because he and Jacob did some things didn't mean that was all there was to his relationship. He flipped Richie off with such fire in his eyes, it was as though his middle finger was made of pure heat.

"Fuck. You. Jacob's actually a really great guy, and he's coming over tomorrow night, so no, Richie. Contrary to your belief system, not everything is about sex. This is why you don't have a girlfriend. You're so closed-minded!" Eddie began to grow more wobbly, as though vertigo was the only thing he could feel. He nearly fell to the floor, but Richie's body was there to stop him.

"I could get a girlfriend if I wanted! I just don't want to!" Richie almost yelled, pain stinging his heart as he bit back the urge to say "because I'm in love with *you* and can't *stand* the thought of being with anyone else."

"And besides, you have no room to talk, Mr. 'I met my boyfriend at a gay bar.'," He snapped, all that time spent staying up and waiting for Eddie beginning to catch up with him. What little filter he had before had been flipped completely off.

"That is so not true! Jacob and I work together at the hospital, and I happen to know he's very good at what he does!"

“Oh, what does he do? Lemme guess, drink the piss samples?” Richie’s eyes burned with unshed tears, jealousy and anger being the only emotions he could feel.

“Piss off, you vulgar dickhead! I’m going upstairs to nap.” Eddie shoved angrily past his shoulder, heading upstairs. And Richie would have left it there, had he not been so unbelievably riled up.

“Tired from all that dirty gay sex with Jacob? Thought so, Girly Boy!” When he heard the door slam, he knew he’d crossed a line, and slammed the apartment door as he left.

The moment he got back to his own apartment, Bev reached out to touch his shoulder, worry evident on her face. He was radiating such a dark aura, she could almost see a storm cloud above his head.

“You okay there, Richie Rich?” She inquired, the nickname used as an attempt to lighten the mood. He tore his glasses off and tossed them to the side, not caring as they shattered against the floor, and buried his face in the bedsheets. Their apartment was all one-room, the kitchen, living room, office, and bedroom all in an open-concept space. There was a small bathroom to the left, but it could barely fit both of them in it together.

He began screaming uncontrollably into the sheets, repressed tears spilling onto the fabric. The middle of the apartment was not the ideal spot to have a mental breakdown, but he supposed it was better if Bev was there with him.

“Woah there, buckaroo. Bad night?” She placed a hand gently on his back, rubbing soothing circles as her motherly instinct began to take over. At her words, he proceeded to sob louder, and they for a while they sat with his head in her lap, manicured fingers carding through unruly curls, soft hums filling the air until he fell asleep against her. She gently moved him so that he was lying comfortably on the bed, opting to go to Will-- her gossip buddy-- for the answers she needed.

Bevvie: hey will so like what happened to richie

Wi11 By3r5: OMG don’t even get me started. they had a HUGE fight this morning.

Bevvie: what why

Wi11 By3r5: eddie got a BOYFRIEND!

Bevvie: ????

Wi11 By3r5: i dunno much but like eddie met him at a gay bar and they might have banged?

Bevvie: eddie banging a random dude doesnt seem plausible

Bevvie: and why didnt he tell anyone where he was

Wi11 By3r5: IDK but it ended with richie making a comment about “dirty gay sex” and them both slamming doors lol it was wild asf.

Bevvie: oml call the marine corps we have a world war on our hands

Wi11 By3r5: you really think?

Bevvie: oh i know

Bevvie: richie cried for like 2 hours

Bevvie: fuck that he was bawling like a kitten who lost its mother

Wi11 By3r5: yeah eddie wasnt much better. he punched a wall i think. that or body slammed it. intentions unclear.

Bevvie: jesus fckin christ

Wi11 By3r5: my thoughts exactly.

3. Some Texts and Insomnia

Summary for the Chapter:

Eddie begins manstruating and reflects. He struggles with reality a bit.

Notes for the Chapter:

MINI CHAPTER FTW

more comments pls they feed my writing skills

THANK FOR SUPPORT

“Eds?” Bill knocked hesitantly on the white wood of his friend’s bedroom door, leaning against it. He heard a frustrated groan from inside the room, and then the door rattled on its hinges as though something had been thrown at it.

“Don’t you fucking call me that, Bill!” He called from inside, as more questionable crashing sounds emitted from the room. It wasn’t like it was huge-- there was probably just enough room for a bed, a desk, and a dresser-- but it seemed like every little object he had in it was being broken.

“Come on, Eh- Eddie. Let’s talk.” He tried knocking again, and twisting the quite obviously locked doorknob, cursing silently under his breath.

“You wanna talk? Fine, let’s *talk* about how Richie’s never fucking allowed in this apartment again! I don’t want to hear him, or talk to him, or even have to look at his stupid face!” Eddie yelled, sounding quite a bit like a toddler throwing a tantrum. The thought made Bill want to laugh, but Eddie would probably only get more angry if he did.

“He’s your buh- b- best friend. Don’t you think that’s a little harsh?” In all honesty, Bill hadn’t slept much the prior night either, worried about his best friend. And it seemed like Eddie was really bent on keeping that ‘Jacob’ guy around.

"Fuck that! If he were my best friend, he would be supporting me right now," Eddie grumbled, but it at least seemed like he wasn't throwing things anymore. Bill heaved a heavy sigh.

"You were gone all night, and you buh- both said s- some pretty hurtful things," Bill tried to reason. But Eddie was having none of that.

"He knows how I feel about... about being dirty and he just... he didn't even care and I just feel like you guys always think of me differently because I'm gay-" He sniffled, mood shifting quicker than Canadian weather, "Like, he's never talked to Bev like that when she got a boyfriend... or Max, or Lucas... not even Mike and Jane and Will. It hurts to think that somehow he thinks I'm weaker, and it brings back all that old shit from my Ma."

"Can you le- eht me in? I wanna give you a hug," Bill mumbled carefully, trying to keep his voice steady, as Eddie was already crying. He decided with finality that-- just as he had when they were kids-- he would have to be the leader. Mike was the Loser's mediator, but Bill was the leader. It felt unfair to involve Mike in something he had no technical part in, but he would if they had to.

After waiting for about thirty seconds, the door hesitantly unlocked and Eddie nearly fell into his arms, face red and hair mussed. Looking briefly behind him, Bill could see that Eddie had in fact completely wrecked his room and even torn down some of the fairy lights he had hanging before.

He rested his chin on Eddie's head, just holding him in the doorway of his room for several minutes, until Eddie was finally able to compose himself and step away.

"I'm sorry, Bill. This is such a stupid thing to cry about. I- I didn't mean anything I said before. I was just mad because sometimes I forget that Richie's nickname is 'Trashmouth,' and he has no filter. I'm so sorry," He sighed, casting his glance back into his utterly destroyed room and burying his head in his hands at the sight, "Jesus... what did I do?"

"I'll huh- help you clean it," Bill offered, only to have Eddie shake

his head and run a hand through his wild hair. Sometimes, both boys could be too considerate and selfless for their own good.

“No... don’t- don’t bother. I made the mess, I’ll pick it up.” Eddie waved his hand dismissively in Bill’s direction, stepping into the disaster zone to start cleaning up. He briefly wondered why he’d just gone through three mood cycles in the span of fifteen minutes, but it only made him feel worse when he dwelled on it.

That night, he didn’t sleep at all. He tossed and turned, trying desperately to find a comfortable position, but to no avail. He couldn’t help but hear Richie’s voice, filled with hate and anger. *Girlly boy, girly boy, nothing but a dirty faggot girly boy.*

It nagged in the back of his mind like an itch he just couldn’t reach, and it left him crying silently into his pillow at three in the morning. He thought his phone would be a decent distraction, but he’d never been more wrong.

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 8:37 PM]:** *hey hows it fidizzlin homie*

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 8:49 PM]:** *ok i admit that was bad*

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 9:00 PM]:** *hey so like u said ud be home by 8:30??*

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 9:02 PM]:** *what gives???*

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 9:08 PM]:** *can u answer one of bills calls hes getting his panties in a twist*

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 9:43 PM]:** *OK FINE IM WORRIED TOO*

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 9:56 PM]:** *um spaghetti man i hate to ask but*

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 9:57 PM]: is this cuz i fucked ur mom last night

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:05 PM]: OK ILL MAKE U A DEAL

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:05 PM]: U TEXT BACK AND I WONT TLEL ANOTHER MOM JOKE FOR 3 DAYS

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:09 PM]: fine a week

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:34 PM]: 2 weeks

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:38 PM]: eds cmon were all getting kinda worried

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:44 PM]: plz pick up one of our calls

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 10:52 PM]: were getting worried

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:01 PM]: we care abt u man

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:03 PM]: eddie u cant do this 2 us

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:08 PM]: i finally get what u mean when u use the phrase 'panic attack'

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:11 PM]: im staying over

MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:11 PM]: at your apt

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:23 PM]:** eds plz pick up i might cry fr

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:31 PM]:** img_73IHD5JSB9D.jpg

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:32 PM]:** I MISS YOU

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 11:35 PM]:** were all the snapchat added hearts too much??

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 12:02 PM]:** EDWARD SPAGHEDWARD
KASPBRACCKQUE PICK UP THE PHONNNNEE

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 12:44 PM]:** WHAT ARE YOU DOING

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 1:04 AM]:** should i alert the FBI agent
monitoring my phone

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 1:07 AM]:** eds whats it gonna take

**MY SUPER SEXY AWESOME BOYFRIEND W/ A 6 PACK
[DELIVERED, YESTERDAY, 4:56 AM]:** please

Everything about it screamed *Richie*. From his contact name-- which the boy himself had changed-- to his profile picture to his texting style. It was doing things to him, knowing that Richie cared *that much*, giving him false hope that maybe his feelings could be reciprocated. But Eddie knew that was as bullshit as the pills his mother gave him as a child.

He resorted to opening his Biology textbook and inattentively eyeing the pages until he passed out on them. Nothing felt real in that moment, like he was floating through oddly thick Jello that made his brain drowsy. It left him wondering if the encounter with Richie was even real or not, his brain hurting as he tried to pick apart the

differences between reality and fiction.

That night, he dreamt of falling into a deep abyss with no end in sight, screaming at the top of his lungs only to have nobody respond. Slowly having the life sucked out of him with every further meter he fell. It was a strange sort of feeling, but he allowed it just that once.

When he woke up, he felt more tired than he had before he'd fallen asleep. But he opted to suck it up and trudge through the day anyways. Not like he had anything going on. Except the date with Jacob. *The date with Jacob!* He almost jumped, the realization hitting him like a truck. He really was *dating* Jacob.

He wondered if his friends would notice the similarities like he did, or if they'd just brush him off and move on. Conflicting parts of himself each hoped for the opposite thing. And the little part of free will he had left wished he himself could just stop for a second and appreciate what he had instead of causing more drama.

All he'd wanted in the first place was a date. Now that he had one and the time for it was nearing, he'd never been more nervous for someone to step through that chipping wooden door.

4. Prostitution to Prove a Point

Summary for the Chapter:

Richie hires a prostitute.

Notes for the Chapter:

SORRY THIS TOOK SO LONG MY INSPIRATION
YOTE ITSELF OUT THE DOOR FOR A HOT MINUTE
anyways pls comment pls leave long comments they
make me cry and give mah hart the fattest boner.
SORRY THIS IS SO BAD AND SHORT

“Can’t get a girlfriend...’ I could get a girlfriend if I wanted to, right Max?” Richie scoffed, the words exchanged from the night before ringing in his head.

“Sure, Richie,” She replied in a rather bored tone, attention focused on the gaming magazine she was reading.

“What, you don’t think I could?” He inquired, scoffing at her implication. Was that really how all of his friends thought of him?

“Didn’t say that.” Max held her hands up in defence, rolling her eyes in an irritated and bored manner.

“But you were thinking it. I could get a girlfriend if I wanted to. I could get *ten* girlfriends if I wanted to.”

“Alright, lover boy, don’t just talk. Go wild.” The redhead clearly held no interest in his dramatic proclamation, barely sparing him a second glance. He was at her and Jane’s shared apartment, at first in order to use their computer to write his Literature report but quickly changing his tune when he realized he could bother Max about Eddie’s prior comments. They were still bouncing around in his head, and he felt a little sick and dizzy thinking too hard on them.

And so he trudged back to his own apartment-- where Beverly was absent as she was currently at work-- and began to ponder ways of finding a girlfriend. Even though girls weren’t his top priority, Eddie

made it pretty clear he was referring to *girls* specifically as the criteria to prove him wrong.

He couldn't just meet one at a bar, it would be too hypocritical and Eddie would catch right on. And he couldn't just use Beverly as his pretend girlfriend, because that was far too obvious. The whole 'online dating,' scene wasn't really for him, and he'd kind of hit a roadblock.

Until he remembered one very important advantage to picking his mother up from her yoga classes every Saturday evening. *The prostitutes*. Okay, maybe not 'important,' necessarily but definitely relevant.

Because he spent a fair amount of time waiting on his mother, he'd been able to converse with a few of the others who had just been let out of the class before Maggie's. Three of which were prostitutes, all living in the same apartment only about a block or so away from his.

He'd become rather acquainted with all three, but his mind was set on one in particular. Leona Reaves. She was tall, paler than even himself-- which was saying something-- and of average weight. But she had a similar sense of humor to him and her bleach-blond hair would certainly not be too obvious. She was the only one of the three without extremely noticeable implants, the slight amount of extra weight instead contributing to thicker curves and equally proportionate... assets.

He found himself knocking on their door, in a trashier hallway with questionably stained carpet that smelled a little bit of cleaning supplies and a little bit of raw meat. It took them so long to answer he wondered whether or not they were even home at all.

When someone did answer, it was Maria, coincidentally the only one of them that didn't speak English. She instead spoke Spanish natively, which was absolutely terrible luck considering he knew nothing of Spanish other than the accent. It was almost as though something didn't want him to find Leona.

"Richie? ¿Qué estás haciendo aquí? ¿Necesitas algo? ¿Aquí para comprar de nosotros?" She began, speaking quickly as she ushered

him in, “Nuestros precios han subido recientemente. Si quieres una noche-- o un día, supongo-- de diversión, tendrás que pagar. Sin embargo, podemos hacer mucho.”

“Um, I don’t... is Leona here? I need to speak with her.” Richie gesticulated each of his words wildly, as though she were an alien and not just someone who was speaking a different language. He had also, rather unconsciously, been using a very offensive Spanish accent to address her, and from the looks of it she wasn’t exactly enjoying it.

“Ay Dios Mio...” She trailed off, pinching the bridge of her nose. Richie cringed. Aside from borderline offensive Voices he had done in Spanish accents, he knew nothing of the language and had no idea if she were even hearing the words he had been saying.

“Leona! ¡Dick dice que tiene negocios contigo!” Internally, Richie was wondering if she had just said something about a dick, but externally, he was planning out just *how* he was going to ask a prostitute to be his fake girlfriend in order to prove a point to his friends and crush, who apparently had more success getting laid than the self-proclaimed sex master himself.

“What? You mean Maggie’s son Richie? What does he want?” He finally heard Leona’s voice carrying through the paper-thin walls and into the dingy kitchen.

“Diviértete, gilipollas.” She waved a dismissive hand at him and sauntered back into her own room, just as Leona walked out. She was wearing a faded pink bathrobe that looked like it had at one point been nice, but was missing pieces of fuzz in patches and had dirt and various bodily fluids littering it.

He cleared his throat and-- after a short internal battle with his instincts-- spoke up.

“Hey there, Leona. I was wondering if you had a moment to talk about a potential job offer. I mean, it’s not really like what you usually do-- I hope-- but I’ll pay you well.” And so he did it, spilled out his guts to his mother’s yoga friend. Told her about Eddie and Jacob and Max and Beverly, how utterly bisexual and confused he was, and how much he wanted to tell Eddie how he felt but couldn’t,

because there was just too much at stake. He told her of the guilt he still felt because of Maggie and how he'd been thinking that maybe Eddie could have suffered the same fate. He told her all the times he'd come so close to confessing, and all the times he'd played it off with a joke.

And just as he thought she was going to deny him, an agreement was made. Three weeks only, and minimal sex involved. She would have to be allowed to have other clients and their relationship would have to be strictly business unless one of his friends were around. They would stay mostly around his apartment and she was *not* responsible for any mishaps that may arise from the complicated situation. She wrote up a contract and he signed. He felt like he was signing his own death warrant, but his pride was too palpable for him to back out.

And so began their fake relationship, and his poorly constructed Eddie Kaspbrak revenge plan.

Notes for the Chapter:

hey friendly reminder please comment